

The Influence of Word of Mouth and Product Quality on Purchase Decisions at Citra Sukawinatan Refillable Water Depot in the Digital Era

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the influence of Word of Mouth and Product Quality on Purchasing Decisions at Citra Sukawinatan Gallon Refill Drinking Water Depot in the Digital Era with a focus on Sukawinatan residents who visit to buy Citra Sukawinatan gallon refill drinking water. The research method uses quantitative, The research sample amounted to 170 respondents, selected using probability sampling techniques. Data were collected through questionnaires distributed directly to respondents. Data testing includes validity, reliability tests, and classical assumption tests such as normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity. The results of the study indicate that partially, the Word of Mouth and Product Quality variables each have a positive and significant effect on Purchasing Decisions. Simultaneously, both variables also have a positive and significant effect on Purchasing Decisions at Citra Gallon Refill Drinking Water Depot. It can be concluded that good customer experience and superior product quality are important factors in driving consumer purchasing decisions. These findings provide strategic insights for Citra Gallon Refill Depot Management to increase competitiveness through optimizing customer experience and better product quality.

Keywords: Word of Mouth, Product Quality, Purchasing Decisions

INTRODUCTION

In the midst of globalization and increasingly competitive business environments, companies strive to maintain their advantages and competitiveness. Consumers now expect more relevant and engaging interactions, particularly through digital channels, making purchasing decisions increasingly influenced by the company's ability to align products with consumer preferences through data, analytics, and effective marketing strategies (Kotler & Keller, 2020).

A business's success largely depends on the strategies it implements to positively influence consumer decisions. Consumers' perceptions of Word of Mouth (WOM) and product quality have a significant impact on marketing effectiveness. Effective marketing emphasizes consumer experience,

personalization, and proper communication, making purchasing decisions a key indicator of a business's ability to attract interest and build customer loyalty.

A purchasing decision is the process of selecting and determining goods or services based on needs, preferences, price, quality, and brand (Arfah, 2022). According to Schiffman & Kanuk (2022), purchasing decisions involve both mental and emotional processes, can be rational or emotional, and are influenced by psychological and social factors such as attitudes, personality, experience, and peer or family influence.

Word of Mouth affects purchasing decisions by transmitting positive or negative experiences from one consumer to another (Afifi & Wahyuni, 2019; Kimilawati et al., 2022). Positive WOM can increase consumer trust, encourage repeat purchases, and strengthen brand loyalty, while negative WOM, such as complaints or criticisms, can reduce purchase intention and potentially damage the brand's reputation if not properly addressed (Hassan et al., 2023).

Product quality is also a key factor in purchasing decisions. High-quality products can meet consumer needs and expectations, increasing satisfaction, trust, and customer loyalty (Arinawati & Suryadi, 2021; Kotler et al., 2020). Previous research has shown that product quality positively influences purchasing decisions, although in certain situations, excessively high quality or mismatched products may have negative effects, for example, due to high prices or misalignment with consumer needs (Milano et al., 2021).

This study was conducted on Citra refillable gallon drinking water in Palembang, which is known for its good water quality, satisfactory service, and affordable prices. Consumers tend to consider the experiences of others before making purchases, making WOM a crucial factor in purchasing decisions. Moreover, good water quality and service also serve as key factors influencing consumer satisfaction and loyalty.

Field observations indicate that WOM and product quality mutually reinforce each other in affecting purchasing decisions. Positive recommendations and maintained water quality increase consumer trust and loyalty, whereas complaints regarding cleanliness or poor service may lead consumers to switch to competitors. Based on these findings, this study focuses on the influence of WOM and product quality on the purchasing decisions of consumers of Citra refillable gallon drinking water in Sukawinatan, aiming to provide a clearer understanding of the factors that influence consumer decisions.

METHOD

This study employs a quantitative approach using a survey method, aiming to measure the relationships among variables objectively and systematically. The population consists of consumers who refilled water at Depot Air Minum Citra Sukawinatan over a six-month period, from October 2024 to March 2025, totaling 298 individuals. The sampling technique used is *probability sampling*, which provides an equal chance for every individual in the population to be selected as a sample, with simple random sampling applied. Data were collected through a questionnaire designed using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from "Strongly Disagree" (1) to "Strongly Agree" (5). Example statements include: "I often share

my experience of using water gallons from Depot Air Minum Citra Sukawinatan with others,” measuring the Word of Mouth variable (X1); “I consider the water gallons from Citra Sukawinatan safe for consumption by all family members,” measuring the Product Quality variable (X2); and “I have no hesitation in deciding to purchase products from Citra Sukawinatan,” measuring the Purchase Decision variable (Y).

Validity and reliability tests were conducted to ensure the feasibility of the research instrument. The validity test used the Pearson Product Moment correlation technique, and all items were declared valid because the calculated r-value exceeded the r-table value (0.150) and the significance value was below 0.05. Reliability testing was carried out using the Cronbach’s Alpha method with a minimum threshold of > 0.60, and the average r-values across all variables were 0.778, 0.907, and 0.920, indicating that all variables were reliable. Data analysis was performed using multiple linear regression, as the research model involved two independent variables tested against one dependent variable. Prior to the analysis, classical assumption tests were conducted, including normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity tests. All data processing was performed using SPSS. This method is expected to produce valid, reliable, and accurate findings in explaining the influence of word of mouth and product quality on purchasing decisions at the Citra Sukawinatan refillable gallon water depot in the digital era.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results of the Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

This study employed multiple linear regression analysis to predict the extent of the influence of the variables Word of Mouth (X1) and Product Quality (X2) on Purchase Decision (Y1). The calculations for this test were conducted using SPSS, and the results of the multiple linear regression analysis can be seen in the following table:

Tabel 1. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Coefficients a				
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients
	Model	B	Std. Error	Beta
1	(Constant)	5,451	3,276	
	Word of Mouth (X1)	0,692	0,056	0,667
	Kualitas Produk (X2)	0,639	0,122	0,281
a. Dependent Variable: Keputusan Pembelian (Y1)				

Data source: Processed using SPSS, Version 25 (2025)

Based on Table 1 provided by IBM SPSS Statistics, the resulting equation is as follows:

$$Y = 5.451 + 0.692X1 + 0.639X2 + e$$

1. Constant (a) = 5.451 The constant value of 5.451 indicates that if the Word of Mouth (X1) and Product Quality (X2) variables do not change or are equal to zero, the Purchase Decision (Y1) will remain at 5.451 units.
2. Regression Coefficient X1 (b) = 0.692 The positive regression coefficient indicates a direct relationship between Word of Mouth and Purchase Decision. This means that if Word of Mouth increases by 1 unit, the

Purchase Decision will increase by 0.692 units, assuming other variables remain constant. Conversely, if Word of Mouth decreases by 1 unit, the Purchase Decision will decrease by 0.692 units.

3. Regression Coefficient X2 (b) = 0.639 This coefficient is also positive, indicating a direct relationship between Product Quality and Purchase Decision. Thus, an increase of 1 unit in Product Quality will increase the Purchase Decision by 0.639 units, assuming other variables remain constant. Conversely, a decrease of 1 unit in Product Quality will reduce the Purchase Decision by 0.639 units.

Results of the Partial Test (t-test)

The t-test was conducted to determine whether an independent variable (X) has a partial effect on the dependent variable (Y) by comparing the t-calculated value with the t-table value and examining the significance level. The following are the t-test results from the research questionnaire:

Tabel 2. PartialTest

Coefficients a						
	Unstandardized Coefficients			Standardized Coefficients		
	Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	5,451	3,276		1,664	0,098
	<i>Word of Mouth (X1)</i>	0,692	0,056	0,667	12,443	0,000
	Kualitas Produk (X2)	0,639	0,122	0,281	5,245	0,000
a. Dependent Variable: Y1						

Data source: Processed using SPSS, Version 25 (2025)

H1: Word of Mouth (X1) affects Purchase Decision (Y1)

Based on the analysis, the significance value for the Word of Mouth variable is 0.001, which is smaller than the 0.05 significance threshold. The t-calculated value of 12.443 indicates that this variable has a positive effect on Purchase Decision. Since the significance value < 0.05, Hypothesis 1 is accepted. Therefore, it can be concluded that Word of Mouth significantly influences Purchase Decision. In other words, the higher the intensity of Word of Mouth received by consumers, the greater their tendency to make a purchase.

H2: Product Quality (X2) affects Purchase Decision (Y1)

The results show that the significance value for the Product Quality variable is 0.001, also below 0.05, with a t-calculated value of 5.425. This indicates that Product Quality has a positive and significant effect on Purchase Decision. Since the significance value < 0.05, Hypothesis 2 is accepted.

Results of the Simultaneous Test (F-Test)

The F-test is used to assess the extent to which the regression model fits the sample data and to identify whether at least one independent variable has a significant effect on the dependent variable. This test provides an overview of the overall suitability of the regression model with the data.

Tabel 3. Simultaneous Test

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ANOVA ^a						
	Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	113,303	2	56,652	18,684	,000b
	Residual	72,771	24	3,032		
	Total	186,074	26			

Data source: Processed using SPSS, Version 25 (2025)

H3: Based on the F-test results in Table 4.10, the significance value obtained is 0.000, which is less than the 0.05 significance level. The calculated F value of 18.684 also indicates a strong influence. Since the significance value < 0.05 , it can be concluded that this regression model is simultaneously significant. In other words, Word of Mouth and Product Quality together have a significant effect on Purchase Decisions.

Results of the Determination Coefficient Test

The correlation coefficient test is used to determine the existence of a relationship between variables and to measure the strength of that relationship. Meanwhile, the coefficient of determination is used to evaluate how well the regression model can explain the dependent variable based on the independent variables. This test helps to assess the extent to which the independent variables influence the dependent variable (Sugiyono, 2019).

Tabel 4. Determination Coefficient Test

Model Summary ^b				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,906	0,822	0,819	4,629
a. Predictors: (Constant), X2, X1				
b. Dependent Variable: Y1				

Data source: Processed using SPSS, Version 25 (2025)

Based on Table 4, the R value of 0.906 indicates a strong correlation between the independent variables, namely Word of Mouth (X1) and Product Quality (X2), and the dependent variable, Purchase Decision (Y1). This value reflects that, statistically, these two independent variables have a considerable relationship with the dependent variable. In other words, changes in X1 and X2 simultaneously will significantly impact changes in Y1.

Furthermore, the R Square value of 0.822 indicates that this regression model can explain 82.2% of the variation in the Purchase Decision variable. This demonstrates that the contribution of Word of Mouth and Product Quality in influencing purchase decisions is substantial. The remaining 17.8% is explained by other variables outside the research model that may also have an effect but were not included in this analysis. Therefore, although the relationship found is strong, it is important to consider other factors that may also play a role in influencing purchase decisions.

DISCUSSION

The Influence of Word of Mouth on Purchase Decisions

Based on the t-test results, Word of Mouth (WOM) significantly influences the purchase decision of Citra Sukawinatan refillable drinking water. The t-value exceeding the t-table and a significance value below 0.05 indicate that WOM contributes meaningfully to consumer decision-making. Consumers tend to trust information from close contacts such as friends, family, or neighbors, and positive recommendations or testimonials from previous users play a crucial role, especially for health-related products like drinking water.

The study results show that WOM has a positive and significant effect on the purchase decision of Citra Sukawinatan refillable water. This aligns with findings from Mohammad Kurniawan et al. (2024) on the influence of TikTok social media use, brand image, and WOM on purchasing decisions at Athena Beauty Clinic in Palembang, highlighting WOM's role in building trust through prior consumer experiences. Positive testimonials reassure potential buyers and reduce hesitation, while negative experiences can harm product image and reduce purchase interest.

In densely connected communities such as Sukawinatan, WOM's influence is stronger due to active social communication. Satisfied consumers are likely to share their experiences, creating a domino effect that increases the number of buyers. Consequently, WOM not only affects purchase decisions but also helps expand market reach through ongoing word-of-mouth communication.

The Influence of Product Quality on Purchase Decisions

Product quality has been proven to have a significant effect on purchase decisions based on t-test results. The quality dimensions in this study include water taste, clarity, consumption safety, and cleanliness of the container or gallon. Consumers pay close attention to these factors because they directly affect family health. When a product is perceived as high-quality and meets expectations, the decision to purchase or repurchase becomes stronger. Water refill depots that maintain quality standards will gain a competitive advantage in the eyes of consumers.

This study also shows that product quality significantly influences purchase decisions. These findings align with research by Rohaeni et al. (2023), Anisya et al. (2020), and Maulana et al. (2024), which indicate that better product quality increases consumer purchase intention. For refillable drinking water, indicators such as clarity, taste, cleanliness of the gallon, and filling process are key in shaping consumer trust. High-quality products create satisfaction, brand trust, and enhance customer loyalty. However, Milano et al. (2021) found that excessively high quality can negatively affect purchase decisions if it leads to higher prices or does not match consumer needs. Therefore, business owners must adjust product quality to remain relevant, affordable, and aligned with market expectations.

Moreover, product quality often serves as the primary basis for consumers to compare different water refill brands. While lower prices may initially attract interest, consumers tend to prioritize quality in their final decision. Consistent quality not only encourages the first purchase but also builds long-term loyalty. Therefore, Citra water refill depots must regularly conduct quality control and

ensure that all production processes are free from contamination and comply with hygiene standards to maintain consumer trust.

The Influence of Word of Mouth and Product Quality on Purchase Decisions

The results of the F-test indicate that Word of Mouth and product quality simultaneously have a significant effect on purchase decisions. This suggests that both factors complement and reinforce each other in influencing consumer behavior. This finding is consistent with Kurniawan et al. (2024), who stated that Word of Mouth has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions, and with Asri Maulana et al. (2024), who found that product quality significantly affects consumer purchase decisions. Consumers do not base their decisions solely on personal experience but also consider information from others' experiences through Word of Mouth. When the Word of Mouth received aligns with the perceived product quality, consumers feel more confident and assured in making their purchase. The combination of both factors creates a strong perception of the product.

Positive Word of Mouth shared by satisfied consumers strengthens public trust in the quality of galon water from the Citra Sukawinatan depot. Conversely, high product quality naturally encourages the generation of positive Word of Mouth without being requested. Therefore, the depot's marketing strategy should not only focus on improving product quality but also on establishing strong relationships with customers, encouraging them to voluntarily share positive experiences. This approach creates an effective and sustainable cycle of natural promotion.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study on the influence of Word of Mouth and Product Quality on the purchase decisions of Citra Sukawinatan refillable drinking water, it can be concluded that both variables have a significant impact. Word of Mouth (X1) positively and significantly affects purchase decisions (Y1), as indicated by the t-test (significance = 0.000 < 0.05; t-count 12.443 > t-table 1.706), meaning higher Word of Mouth intensity increases the likelihood of consumer purchases. Product Quality (X2) also has a positive effect on purchase decisions (significance = 0.000 < 0.05; t-count 5.245 > t-table 1.706), showing that better product quality enhances consumer purchasing decisions. Simultaneously, both Word of Mouth and Product Quality significantly influence purchase decisions (F-test significance = 0.000 < 0.05; F-count 18.684 > F-table 3.40). The regression equation $Y = 5.451 + 0.692X1 + 0.639X2 + e$ indicates that Word of Mouth has a greater impact than Product Quality, supported by its higher coefficient (0.692 vs. 0.639), while the correlation value $R = 0.906$ shows a very strong relationship and $R \text{ Square} = 0.822$ indicates that 82.2% of the variation in purchase decisions can be explained by these variables. Recommendations: For Citra Sukawinatan Refillable Drinking Water Depot, it is advised to improve product quality and gallon hygiene, maintain water clarity and taste, and conduct regular quality control. Additionally, the depot should leverage Word of Mouth by fostering good customer relationships and encouraging positive testimonials. For future researchers, it is recommended to include other variables such as price, promotions, or service, apply qualitative or

mixed-method approaches, and conduct studies in different locations to broaden the generalizability of the findings.

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